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Effects of World War II Upon Certain Administrative and Instructional Aspects of Newport News High School

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EFFECTS OF WORLD WAR II UPON CERTAIN ADMINISTRATIVE AND
INSTRUCTIONAL ASPECTS OF NEWPORT NEWS HIGH SCHOOL

A Project

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Education

The College of William and Mary

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Education

by

John Franklyn Powers

August 1951

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J. F. P.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM

This study was an attempt to discover certain administrative and instructional modifications, both temporary and permanent, at Newport News High School, Newport News, Virginia, which could have been attributed directly to World War II or indirectly to the consequences thereof.

The purposes of the study were fourfold. First, to determine the permanent effects of the war upon the Newport News High School. Second, to suggest possible additional effects which, while not apparent at present, may yet prove to be significant in the future. Third, to make recommendations, arising from the war experience, as to ways of strengthening Newport News High School. Fourth, to anticipate how the school can more effectively discharge its obligations in the event of another period of national emergency.

The idea was first conceived upon the reading of an abstract of a doctoral dissertation, dealing with wartime influences on the high school curriculum in the State of Virginia.¹ One aspect of

¹ George J. Oliver, "Wartime Influences on Secondary School Curriculum in Virginia", Virginia Journal of Education, 44:17, May, 1951.

this study has been to compare the findings of the above work with the findings concerning the local situation at Newport News. The treatment was not limited solely to curricular changes, however, but also included an investigation of the wartime effects upon the school's enrollment, faculty turnover, extra-curricular program, and housing and equipment problems.

SIGNIFICANCE

An analysis of the data gathered for this report would have value for anyone seeking to understand the present high school, which has retained many of the wartime modifications. Even a knowledge of the temporary deviations from the customary routine, experienced during the war, would be helpful in interpreting the prevailing system. The findings could also serve as a basis for action in the event of another national emergency. Need of additional teachers in certain subject fields could be anticipated, for instance, and equipment shortages avoided.

This endeavor was particularly significant to the investigator, a faculty member at the institution in question, because of the knowledge gained, concerning the organization and administration of the school.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

World War II. The term as used in this project referred to

that period of time beginning with Adolph Hitler's invasion of Poland, September 1, 1939, and ending with the Japanese surrender (V-J Day), September 2, 1945.

Pre-War. Since the war itself was interpreted to include a span of six years, starting with 1939, reference to the pre-war period included the four years prior to that time (1935-1938).

Post-war. Referred to that duration of time between September 2, 1945 and the time of writing (1951).

Newport News High School. Only the last four grades of the enrollment, at any given time, were studied because, beginning in the fall semester of 1945-1946, the schools of the City of Newport News were in transition from an eleven year to a twelve year system. Thus, prior to 1945-1946, the enrollment figures represented the eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh grades. After that time, pupils in the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades were considered.

Permanent changes. For the purposes of this research, those changes which persisted five years after V-J Day, or until September 2, 1950, were taken to be permanent. Those of shorter duration were classified as temporary.

Extra-curricular. It was acknowledged that, in the modern educational field, the term "extra-curricular" is in ill use.

However, to facilitate the organization of chapters, it was applied to those activities sponsored by the school but not listed in its formal schedule of classes.

SOURCES OF DATA

The primary source of information was the minutes of the Newport News School Board meetings. They included, not only the measures pertaining to the high school which were passed by the Board, but the discussions, pro and con, of every issue which came before the members.

Another fruitful source was the records in the high school principal's office. The annual reports to the State Department of Education, the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges, the local Superintendent of Schools, and the yearly Progress Reports were examined.

In the Superintendent's files were located salary schedules, personnel directories, school calendars and his annual reports to the School Board.

Personal interviews proved to be a very helpful means of getting interpretations and explanations of the numerous documents. The wartime Principal, Assistant Principal, and Dean of Girls at Newport News High School were all available for interviews. The present Assistant Superintendent of City Schools and Clerk of the School Board who also served in that capacity during the war, was

most cooperative. The Director of the Evening School and Head of the Industrial Arts Department of the high school, who holds a combined position, supplied a great deal of material pertinent to the problem.

The figures on personnel increases at the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company were provided by its employment office and the Newport News Chamber of Commerce furnished the cost of living statistics.

PROCEDURE

The first step was to collect the data and the principal method used was the historical documentary study. The interview, a tool of normative-survey research, was also employed.

The next move was to analyze and interpret the data, and the interview was used more extensively for that purpose than in the gathering of the information.

Then the material was organized and presented in readable form; and, finally, conclusions and generalizations were formulated and recommendations made.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PROJECT

Chapter One, the introduction, outlines the study in terms of scope, limitations, significance, sources of data, and procedures. It also includes definitions of the terms used, which called for explanation.

The Second Chapter deals with wartime influences upon the Newport News High School curriculum. It starts with the conclusions of a study on a statewide basis, and compares them with the findings at the local level.²

Two phases of the investigation are combined in Chapter Three, namely: effects of the war on the enrollment of the school and the way its faculty turnover was affected.

Effects of the second World War, as reflected in the high school extra-curricular program, is the topic treated in the Fourth Chapter.

A discussion of the housing and equipment problems produced by World War II at Newport News High School is given in Chapter Five.

The sixth Chapter concludes the report and contains a summary of the findings, a formulation of conclusions, and recommendations made by the investigator.

² Oliver, loc. cit.

CHAPTER II

WARTIME INFLUENCES UPON THE CURRICULUM

In a study involving the effect of World War II upon the general secondary school curriculum in the State of Virginia, Dr. George J. Oliver, Chairman of the Department of Education at the College of William and Mary, was primarily concerned with three aspects of the problem. They were, as he stated them:

(a) gross changes in curriculum offerings as represented by the addition or elimination of courses; (b) with instructional emphasis within subject-matter areas which represent departure from pre-war practices and which appear to be associated with wartime experience; and (c) with the persistence or non-persistence of these curriculum modifications in the post-war Virginia secondary school program.¹

The present investigation followed a pattern similar to that outlined above, but limited it to the curriculum of the Newport News High School, Newport News, Virginia. Thus the findings were less general and directly applicable to the local situation only.

Dr. Oliver found that, generally, the influence of the war was felt in the form of modifications of the existing curriculum rather than through the addition of courses.² For the most part

¹ George J. Oliver, "Wartime Influences On the Secondary School Curriculum in Virginia", Virginia Journal of Education, 44:17, May, 1951

² Oliver, loc. cit.

that held true at Newport News, but there were new subjects added, mainly in the field of Industrial Arts. Auto Mechanics, Machine Shop, Metal Shop, Graphic Arts, Pre-flight Aeronautics, and Blueprint Reading for girls were offered for the first time during the war.³

The extensive program of vocational education for war production workers on the Peninsula, inaugurated in 1940 by the Federal Government, was centered at Newport News High School.⁴

Following the entry of the United States into the war in December of 1941, the Hampton Roads Port of Embarkation, and the many other military establishments in the area, had need for trained personnel. The Government was willing to pay the cost of instruction, furnish the equipment, and even pay the trainees while receiving instruction.⁵

The high school then made provision for both day and night adult classes in Mathematics, Chemistry, Mechanical Drawing, Blueprint Reading, Automobile Repair, Electricity, and Diesel Engines.⁶ The United States Government furnished the funds and at the Newport News High School a machine shop, an automobile mechanics shop, and

³ Principal's Progress Report, 1942-1943.

⁴ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, September 4, 1940, p.701

⁵ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, November 9, 1943, p.1013

⁶ Principal's Progress Report, 1939-1940

an additional mechanical drawing room was equipped. Four additional shops, including welding, general metal, sheet metal, and another machine shop, were outfitted at the George Washington School, an abandoned elementary building in the city.⁷

At first, the facilities provided by the Government were not available for use by the pupils of the high school. In fact some of their own equipment and space had to be sacrificed to the defense personnel. Eventually however, the school received great benefits from that program because, at the end of the war, the Federal Government offered the equipment to the School Board, if it could be used for instructional purposes.⁸ The Board accepted the offer and the automobile mechanics, metal, and machine shops, set up for that war project, became permanent divisions of the Newport News High School Industrial Arts Department. Three of the instructors, brought in during the war, were retained on the post-war faculty.⁹

The effect of the Government's Vocational Education program on the high school Industrial Arts Department can be determined by a study of Table I. In the first year of the Federal Project

⁷ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, March 11, 1941, p.745.

⁸ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, October 9, 1945, p.1190

⁹ Principal's Annual High School Report to Virginia State Department of Education, 1945-1946.

(1940-1941) the high school enrollments in that field increased by 132 pupils. The interest remained high until 1945-1946, when the Government turned over the shops in the George Washington School for use by Newport News High School students. That called for traveling back and forth between the high school and George Washington and the number of pupils dropped more than a hundred for that session. In 1946-1947, when the new Vocational Annex to the high school was completed, the enrollments again increased and have continued to do so since that time.

Thus it appears that the Second World War was responsible for three lasting additions to the course of studies, Pre-flight Aeronautics and Blueprint Reading for girls, on the other hand, were only temporary in nature. They were introduced in the 1942-1943 session to meet a wartime need, and dropped, after serving that purpose, two years later.¹⁰

The only course that was dropped from the schedule, as a consequence of the war, was French. Following the capitulation of France, in the summer of 1940, the registrations for beginning French began to decrease until, in 1942-1943, only eight boys and two girls signed up for the class, therefore, it was discontinued.¹¹

¹⁰ Principal's Annual High School Report to Virginia State Department of Education, 1945-1946.

¹¹ Principal's Annual High School Report to Virginia State Department of Education, 1942-1943.

TABLE I

NEWPORT NEWS HIGH SCHOOL
INDUSTRIAL ARTS ENROLLMENTS

YEAR	ENROLLMENT
1935 - 1936	232
1936 - 1937	341
1937 - 1938	383
1938 - 1939	402
1939 - 1940	348
1940 - 1941	480
1941 - 1942	437
1942 - 1943	485
1943 - 1944	431
1944 - 1945	391
1945 - 1946	284
1946 - 1947	354
1947 - 1948	487
1948 - 1949	503
1949 - 1950	503
1950 - 1951	557

TAKEN FROM PRINCIPAL'S ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL
REPORTS TO VIRGINIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION.

It was not offered again until 1949-1950, when pupil demand caused the administration to resume instruction in the language.

Intensification of Physical Education was the most outstanding wartime modification of the curricular program at Newport News High School. The general Physical Education organization was changed and, moreover, the entire daily routine was modified, as indicated by the following quotation from the Superintendent's report to the School Board in January of 1943:

In view of the request by the State and National school authorities that the high school curriculum be adjusted so as to provide a daily period of sixty minutes for Physical Education, Health and Hygiene, I recommend the time schedule in the Newport News High School as follows:

8:25 - Warning bell
 8:30 - Tardy bell
 8:30 - 8:41 - Organization period
 8:44 - 9:40 - A period
 9:43 - 10:39 - B period
 10:42 - 11:38 - C period
 11:41 - 1:11 - D period and three lunch periods
 1:14 - 2:10 - E period
 2:13 - 3:09 - F period
 3:09 - Report to home rooms for dismissal.¹²

The total school day was lengthened by ten minutes, but it started and ended earlier, in order to cooperate with the buses in handling the Shipyard rush. Six periods instead of five were introduced and the activities period eliminated so that a daily period of Physical Education could be provided for all students.

¹² Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, January 12, 1943, p.930

From that time forward, Physical Education has been required of every pupil, every day, except those excused on medical advice. Emphasis was also placed on Health and Hygiene, as well as physical training of the body, and classroom instruction in those two phases of Physical Education was inaugurated.¹³ The re-organization of that department can then be classified as another permanent outgrowth of World War II.

A report by the Superintendent to the School Board, late in 1943, serves to focus attention upon another temporary modification, with a wartime purpose:

The Music Department has fostered the spirit of patriotism through the singing of American Songs for Victory. To this end, assembly programs have been presented, such as: "Our United Nations and the Part They Are Playing", "The Home Front in National Defense", "What Boys and Girls Can Do to Win the War", etc.¹⁴

That was a natural tendency during the national emergency and it moderated gradually as the war drew to a victorious conclusion.

Toward the end of the war, a new philosophy, regarding the teaching of social studies, involving more emphasis on current events, had developed. The principal gave evidence of the new attitude in the Progress Report for 1944-1945 as follows:

¹³ George Ramsey, personal interview, June 28, 1951.

¹⁴ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, October 12, 1943, p.1005

We are beginning to question the historical approach in our social studies. We suggest that the problems that confront our nation and the world today are of transcendent importance and we should begin with them, reaching back into previous history only for connecting facts and background. Of what importance to modern men and women is the Congress of Vienna and who seriously cares what happened there? A certain standard text in United States History contains 579 pages dealing with events up to the Spanish American War, and 172 pages dealing with events thereafter.¹⁵

Another revelation of the Oliver study was that, "the expansion and improvement of guidance services in the high school, stimulated by wartime experience, continues at an accelerated rate in the period since the war".¹⁶

That service was centered in the principal's office at Newport News High School during the pre-war and war periods, but it grew to such proportions after the war that, in 1948-1949, a part-time guidance counselor was employed to initiate a testing program. The next year that counselor devoted full time to guidance work and, at present, she is Head of the Guidance Department with four part-time assistants.¹⁷

Dr. Oliver also reported that there was an increase in the number of units offered in Mathematics and Science during the war, and that they continued in the post-war high school offering.¹⁸

¹⁵ Principal's Progress Report, 1944-1945

¹⁶ Oliver, loc. cit.

¹⁷ George J. McIntosh, personal interview, July 23, 1951.

¹⁸ Oliver, loc. cit.

The present investigation revealed that no additional units in those fields were offered at that time, in the Newport News High School curriculum. According to the principal, it was due to the fact that a full four units, of both Mathematics and Science, had been a part of the course of studies for years.¹⁹

There was, however, increased emphasis in senior Mathematics (Solid Geometry and Trigonometry) as illustrated by the enrollment figures in Table II. The average wartime registration in those courses was twenty-nine pupils, as compared with twenty-two for the pre-war period and twenty-one in the years since the war.

In an interview over Radio Station WGH, on Sunday, September 20, 1942, the Assistant Superintendent of City Schools, spoke of the change in philosophy, underlying the curriculum, brought about by the Second World War. He said:

Everything is being changed because of this great war. It is reasonable to assume that the schools must change to meet the new conditions. In fact, I am of the opinion that this war will bring about permanent changes in our school programs and methods. The school in the past has had too little of real life in it and too much routine. We now face a real crisis, and if we harness our school programs to help in the winning of the war, we shall put real life into the school and make it a more vivid influence on the lives of our children.²⁰

¹⁹ Lamar R. Stanley, personal interview, July 26, 1951.

²⁰ Script of WGH Radio Program, September 20, 1942.

TABLE II

ENROLLMENTS IN HIGHER MATHEMATICS
(SOLID GEOMETRY AND TRIGONOMETRY)

YEAR	ENROLLMENT
1935 - 1936	23
1936 - 1937	28
1937 - 1938	25
1938 - 1939	13
1939 - 1940	21
1940 - 1941	29
1941 - 1942	27
1942 - 1943	32
1943 - 1944	33
1944 - 1945	31
1945 - 1946	35
1946 - 1947	22
1947 - 1948	17
1948 - 1949	9

PRE-WAR AVERAGE	22
WARTIME AVERAGE	29
POST-WAR AVERAGE	21

TAKEN FROM PRINCIPAL'S ANNUAL HIGH
SCHOOL REPORTS FILED WITH THE STATE
BOARD OF EDUCATION.

After the classes set up by the United States at Newport News High School to train defense workers had served that purpose they were continued by the School Board for adults of the community.²¹ That program has become permanent and, at present, the Evening School is an integral part of the school's program.

Summarizing briefly, it is evident that the greatest war-time influence on the curriculum at Newport News High School was in the field of Industrial Arts. Three new classes: Automobile Mechanics, Metal Shop and Machine Shop, were added in that Department, as the result of the training program for war production workers set up by the Federal Government. All the facilities of that movement were turned over to the school at the conclusion of the war. The Industrial Arts enrollment increased, and have continued to do so in the post-war period.

There were also wartime modifications of the various subjects within the pre-war curriculum. Physical Education, for example, was intensified and required daily of every pupil. The Music Department emphasized patriotic songs and the social studies concentrated on contemporary problems.

The great strain placed upon the principal's office, in the matter of pupil counseling, pointed up the need for a Guidance Department, and the present service is an outgrowth of that need.

²¹ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, October 9, 1945, p.1190

There was emphasis, during the war, on Science and Mathematics, but the pre-war curriculum at Newport News had offered four full years instruction in both fields, so no new courses were added.

Adult Education, as a continuation of the wartime offering, has also become a functioning part of the school program.

CHAPTER III

EFFECTS OF THE WAR ON ENROLLMENT AND FACULTY TURNOVER

Newport News was, and is, a great shipbuilding center and, since that industry played a vital role in the war effort of the nation, there was a great influx of war workers to the city during the Second World War. They came in such numbers that, by 1943, at the height of the wartime activity, the average monthly employment figure of the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company was 29,408.¹ The peak was reached in April of that year when 31,016 men and women were on the payroll, as compared to the pre-war average of 6,885 per month.

In view of those facts, it seems that the enrollment of the Newport News High School would have been increased during the war years, but such was not the case. Not only did the high school's enrollment fail to keep pace with the shipyard employee increases but, actually, it fell slightly below its pre-war level.²

The figures reveal, however, that there was a slight decrease in the number of students during the first year of the war in Europe (1939-1940). That loss was, in part, counteracted by the

¹ Table III, p.20

² Table IV, p.21

TABLE III

AVERAGE MONTHLY EMPLOYMENT
 FIGURES - NEWPORT NEWS SHIP-
 BUILDING AND DRY DOCK COMPANY

YEAR	AVERAGE MONTHLY EMPLOYMENT
1935	6,422
1936	7,895
1937	7,264
1938	5,959
1939	8,218
1940	11,446
1941	16,786
1942	27,569
1943	29,408
1944	22,012
1945	15,854
1946	10,989
1947	11,410
1948	11,925
1949	9,568
1950	7,315

TAKEN FROM RECORDS IN EMPLOYMENT
 OFFICE.

TABLE IV

NEWPORT NEWS HIGH SCHOOL
ENROLLMENTS

YEAR	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
1935 - 1936	707	761	1,468
1936 - 1937	684	754	1,438
1937 - 1938	669	717	1,386
1938 - 1939	661	712	1,373
1939 - 1940	618	666	1,284
1940 - 1941	657	682	1,339
1941 - 1942	666	654	1,320
1942 - 1943	643	651	1,294
1943 - 1944	575	633	1,208
1944 - 1945	596	619	1,215
1945 - 1946	494	539	1,033
1946 - 1947	486	463	949
1947 - 1948	481	472	953
1948 - 1949	489	467	956
1949 - 1950	549	526	1,075
1950 - 1951	526	552	1,078

TAKEN FROM PRINCIPAL'S ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL REPORTS
FILED WITH THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

increase following the entry of the United States into the struggle on December 8, 1941, but it never quite attained the pre-war average. In the last two years of the war (1943-1944 and 1944-1945) the number enrolled again dropped off a little. The mean enrollment for the war years was 1,277 pupils as compared to 1,416 for the four years immediately preceding the conflict.

One reason that increases in the number of shipyard employees was not accompanied by corresponding growths in the high school enrollments appears to lie in the fact that the City of Newport News did not have adequate housing to accommodate the incoming workers. That presented a tremendous problem and the Federal Government attempted to solve it by the construction of War Housing Projects. A total of 7,300 family dwellings for whites were built on the Lower Peninsula but, of that number, only 1,329 units were located within the corporate limits of Newport News.³ The Stuart Gardens and Marshall Court projects were in the city but the others were situated in the adjoining Warwick and Elisabeth City Counties. Thus many of the single workers found rooms in Newport News but the great majority of the families moved into the Government settlements in the outlying counties. As a result, most of the boys and girls attended either Warwick or Hampton High School, rather than Newport News High.

³ Alexander Crosby Brown, editor, Newport News' 325 Years, (Richmond: The Baughman Company, 1946) p.338

It seems significant that, during the entire war period (1939-1940 to 1944-1945), the high school population never varied more than 131 pupils.⁴ The largest membership was achieved during the 1940-1941 session, when the figures reached 1,339, and the smallest number registered was 1,208 in 1943-1944.

It is also interesting to note that the boy-girl ratio remained almost constant, with the girls slightly outnumbering the boys, throughout those crucial years. The single exception was in 1941-1942, when the boys were in preponderance by 666 to 654.

The decreasing enrollments in the four years immediately following the war were due, in part, to the beginning of the transition from an eleven to a twelve year system. In this study only the last four grades were included and grade enrollments usually decrease at each succeeding higher grade level.

The migration of transient workers, as well as officers and men of the armed forces, to the Lower Peninsula was felt more keenly in the Evening School enrollments of the Newport News High School.⁵ In the first place, that extension of the school was initiated primarily to train defense workers and, since it consisted mainly of adults, it drew, not only from the city, but from the entire area.⁶

⁴ Table IV, p.21

⁵ Table V, p.24

⁶ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, September 4, 1940, p.701.

TABLE V

EVENING SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS

YEAR	ENROLLMENT
1939 - 1940	747
1940 - 1941	2,536
1941 - 1942	3,233
1942 - 1943	1,481
1943 - 1944	1,298
1944 - 1945	1,139
1945 - 1946	912
1946 - 1947	1,182
1947 - 1948	1,346
1948 - 1949	1,745
1949 - 1950	1,260

TAKEN FROM DIRECTOR OF EVENING
SCHOOL'S RECORDS.

The program was instituted in 1939-1940 and grew rapidly, enrolling 2,536 the second year and 3,233 in 1941-1942. After the war, as pointed out in the last chapter, the night classes were continued and have become a permanent division of the school's curriculum.

Another phase of the high school organization that remained surprisingly steady, in spite of the war, was the number of faculty personnel. At a time when there existed a general condition of restlessness and lack of stability throughout the nation, the faculty turnover at Newport News High School never exceeded fifteen percent (1941-1942) including those who left to enter the service of their country.⁷ In order to comprehend the relative significance of that fact it may be compared with the 74.5% turnover of employees experienced by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company for the year 1942.⁸

During the first year of World War II (1939-1940) the high school lost six percent of its faculty, which was three percent above the average pre-war loss.⁹ The turnover continued to increase until it reached the maximum of fifteen percent in 1941-1942 and then it gradually declined until 1944-1945, the final war year,

⁷ Table VI, p.26

⁸ Annual Report of Employment Manager, Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, 1942.

⁹ Table VI, p.26

TABLE VI

NEWPORT NEWS HIGH SCHOOL
FACULTY TURNOVER

YEAR	TEACHERS LOST	TOTAL FACULTY PERSONNEL	% TURNOVER
1935 - 1936	3	56	5
1936 - 1937	0	58	0
1937 - 1938	0	59	0
1938 - 1939	5	61	8
1939 - 1940	4	67	6
1940 - 1941	8	72	11
1941 - 1942	11	72	15
1942 - 1943	9	68	13
1943 - 1944	7	72	10
1944 - 1945	3	72	4
1945 - 1946	11	73	15
1946 - 1947	9	73	12
1947 - 1948	7	76	9
1948 - 1949	6	78	8

AVERAGE TURNOVER FOR PRE-WAR PERIOD 3%
 AVERAGE TURNOVER FOR WAR PERIOD 10%
 AVERAGE TURNOVER FOR POST-WAR PERIOD 11%

TAKEN FROM SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS TO THE SCHOOL BOARD.

when there was only a four percent change in personnel. The mean wartime turnover, for the six year period, was ten percent.

Studying the breakdown of the fifteen percent turnover for 1941-1942 it can be seen that, of the eleven faculty members who left, six entered the armed forces, one took a civilian job at Langley Field, one resigned to work in the Shipyard, and three women teachers gave up their positions to marry.¹⁰ The loss of the six men, who went into the service, can be directly attributed to the war, and the two who took Government jobs in civilian capacities were also lost to the war effort, while those marrying gave up teaching for normal reasons. Thus the school held its own under very trying conditions.

The wartime principal accounted for that by giving several reasons why his teachers remained in their positions. First, he pointed out that, over a long period of years, the Newport News School Board had built up an attractive salary schedule. Also, a high percentage of the faculty were natives of the Peninsula, and room and board was a great factor to be considered in those days. The working conditions at Newport News High School were always good and the faculty morale high. The School Board, as a result, had many applications and, naturally, was very selective in making

¹⁰ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meetings, 1941-1942.

appointments to the high school staff. All of these facts, according to the contemporary principal, made for good spirit among the teachers and the average term of service at the institution was long.¹¹

Another factor that did not greatly affect the faculty turnover during the war but, which may have long range effects in the years to come, is the increased cost of living in the Hampton Roads area. From Table VII it can be seen that the increases in teachers' salaries at Newport News High School did not match the rising costs of living. While the turnover in personnel during the war was surprisingly low, it may be significant that 24 percent of the 1950-1951 faculty has been lost for the coming year. That figure represents the highest turnover in the history of the school and, of the nineteen teachers leaving, eleven are moving into better paying jobs.¹²

In the light of the information uncovered, it appears that World War II had but little effect on, either the pupil enrollment of Newport News High School, or upon the retention of its teaching staff. Both phases of the system were relatively unchanged, in comparison with the marked employee increases and turnover experienced by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, the

¹¹ Lamar R. Stanley, personal interview, July 19, 1951.

¹² George J. McIntosh, personal interview, August 1, 1951.

TABLE VII

NEWPORT NEWS HIGH SCHOOL
TEACHERS' SALARIES COMPARED
WITH COST OF LIVING IN THE AREA

YEAR	% SALARY INCREASE SINCE 1935 - 1939	% COST OF LIVING INCREASE SINCE 1935 - '39
1940	0	*7
1941	9 (decrease)	15.3
1942	9 (decrease)	24.4
1943	0	30.2
1944	0	31.6
1945	0	34.0
1946	25	57.6
1947	48	68.2
1948	48	74.0
1949	48	68.2
1950	48	79.3

TOTAL COST OF LIVING INCLUDES FOODS, APPAREL, RENT, FUEL, ELECTRICITY, REFRIGERATION, HOUSE FURNISHINGS, AND MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

% SALARY CHANGES TAKEN FROM SALARY SCHEDULES ON FILE IN THE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE.

% COST OF LIVING CHANGES TAKEN FROM STATISTICS PROVIDED BY THE NEWPORT NEWS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

major industry of the city, during the war period. However, the fact that the faculty salaries have not kept pace with the increased cost of living may be significant in the future teacher turnover at the high school.

CHAPTER IV

MODIFICATIONS OF THE EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAM

The extra-curricular activities of the Newport News High School pupils were affected in three general ways by World War II. First, a few pre-war practices were discontinued for the duration of the national emergency. Second, there were those activities which continued in operation, but were greatly curtailed. Finally, a large number of war-promoted programs were sponsored by the school and added to the student's daily experiences, outside the classroom.

The first modification of any consequence, to war demands in this field occurred at the beginning of the second semester of the 1942-1943 session. At that time, it was deemed necessary, in cooperation with requests by the State and National Governments, to revise the schedule at the high school so as to provide a daily period of Physical Education for every pupil. In order to do that the school day was lengthened by ten minutes, divided into six periods instead of five, and the activities period eliminated.¹

¹ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, January 12, 1943, p.930

The loss of the activities period at that time was unfortunate because, with the prevailing manpower shortage in the area, many boys and girls worked after school to help alleviate the situation.² That meant that those youngsters were able only to attend classes, and could not participate in the extra-curricular program of the school.

May Day Festivities and the annual Music Memory Contests were discontinued throughout the war years.³ Night activities, including band drills, play rehearsals, dances, and athletic team practices, were also cut out, between the years 1942 and 1945, in response to Government requests. Dramatic productions and games were permitted, however, because of their recreational value for both civilians and military personnel in the area.⁴

The inter-scholastic athletic program of Newport News High School continued to function, during the war, but on a curtailed basis. The Athletic Department was faced with three major problems, namely: equipment, transportation, and retaining qualified coaching personnel.

The equipment shortages were acute, due to Government

² Annie Lash Jester, editor, Newport News During the Second World War, (Richmond: The Baughman Company, 1948), p.107

³ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, May 8, 1945, p. 1134

⁴ Thomas O. Keesee, personal interview, June 21, 1951.

restrictions on such materials as rubber, leather, and nylon. The Athletic Director said that footballs, basketballs, and basketball shoes became particularly difficult to obtain. In fact (he recalled that) throughout the entire war period, the teams had to make out with the balls and shoes that he had on hand when the limitations were announced.⁵

A second difficulty, with which high school sports were confronted, was indicated by the Assistant Superintendent, who stated it thus:

Transportation Director Eastman has asked schools and professional football promoters to schedule games this fall in centers of population so that as many people as possible will be able to attend games without traveling. Members of football teams may, of course, travel on regular trains and buses, but no special service will be available for this purpose. It should be understood that local attendance at games is not objectionable insofar as this travel can be accommodated by local transportation systems, especially those using steel rails rather than rubber tires.⁶

In line with that Government request, the Virginia High School League asked its member schools to restrict their schedules, so as to keep travel down to a minimum, and the State Track Meet was not held in 1943 and 1944.⁷ Newport News High School also complied with the request, limiting its schedule in all sports, to

⁵ Julius Conn, personal interview, July 28, 1951.

⁶ Script of WGH Radio Program, September 20, 1942.

⁷ The Anchor, Newport News High School yearbook, June, 1944.

the Tidewater area. The football team played Maury High School of Norfolk twice during the 1943 season, and again in 1944 they met on two occasions.⁸

Keeping capable coaches was another wartime problem at Newport News. Whereas the general faculty turnover during the war was low, it was extremely difficult to retain competent personnel in the Athletic Department. The Athletic Director attributed it to the general youth and condition of physical fitness of the men in that field, which rendered them much in demand by the armed forces, as well as elsewhere.⁹

In terms of winning and losing, however, Newport News High School did well during that period. The track team was declared State Champions every year of the war, except in 1943 and 1944, when the State Meet was not held. In those years they also won the combined Eastern-Central District title.¹⁰

The basketball teams were successful, too, taking State Championships in 1942 and 1943, in addition to winning the Eastern District in 1940, 1941 and 1944.¹¹

⁸ Conn, loc. cit.

⁹ Conn, loc. cit.

¹⁰ Records in Athletic Office, Newport News High School.

¹¹ loc. cit.

No titles were won by the football teams of the war period, though they finished second in the State for the 1943 season, which was better than any pre-war or post-war Newport News team has done.¹²

The Director of Athletics explained that the wartime success of the teams, in spite of the many handicaps, was accountable. He said that, prior to the war, they had been at a disadvantage because many of the teams, with which they competed, represented twelve-year school systems, while there were only eleven grades in the Newport News program. Therefore, the average boy on the high school team, at that time, was often one year younger than his opposite on other teams. Consequently, Selective Service and volunteer enlistments hit the older athletes, of the other schools, harder than it did the Newport News High School players. The sports records, for the years of the Second World War, as a result, showed a comparative improvement.¹³

The attitude of the administration toward the many war-effort activities, inaugurated by the high school after Pearl Harbor, was announced by the Assistant Superintendent in a radio address. He declared:

The very best education comes out of activities rather than out of books. Various clubs must be organized in the schools through which the children can see that they are doing something

¹² loc. cit.

¹³ Conn, loc. cit.

definite to help win the war. We shall have a State-wide campaign to collect salvage material, beginning tomorrow. Children will bring the scrap to school. It will make them partners with the soldiers on the battle front. There will be other campaigns in which the children can serve.¹⁴

At Newport News High School, teachers, pupils and patrons cooperated fully in those drives for the collection of waste paper, scrap iron, aluminum, tin, rubber, fats and old clothing. The schools helped motivate participation in those endeavors by sponsoring salvage-gathering contests throughout the city.¹⁵

One of the programs wholeheartedly backed by the educators of the city, was the sale of War Savings bonds and stamps. A total in the amount of \$432,317 were sold through the schools and, as an indication of the part played by Newport News High School, the Superintendent of Schools reported to the Board that bonds and stamps totaling \$532.75 were sold by the high school pupils alone, in the one month of December, 1942.¹⁶

The Music and Drama Departments of the high school conducted a series of plays and entertainments for service men. Some were presented in the school auditorium but, more often, they traveled to the various military establishments in the vicinity.¹⁷ The

¹⁴ Script of WOH Radio Program, September 20, 1942.

¹⁵ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, January 11, 1944, p.1021

¹⁶ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, January 12, 1943, p.931

¹⁷ Jester, loc. cit.

Band also appeared on Navy recruiting programs during the drives to enlist personnel in 1942.¹⁸

During the summer of 1942 an airplane model making course was operated by the General Shop of the Newport News High School. It was sponsored by the United States Navy, Bureau of Aeronautics, and the completed models were sent to Fort Eustis for use in their plane identification training classes.¹⁹

The high school Progress Report for 1942-1943 stated that, "Much of the activity program has been engaged in various war-time projects". The pupils helped with the numerous registrations, made Christmas tree decorations for the soldier camps on the Peninsula, and organized a Victory Corps, "for the purpose of discharging their responsibilities to the country in the present crisis".²⁰

A Volunteer Cadet Corps in the Newport News High School was established in January of that year. It was student initiated, with the permission of the School Board, but under the voluntary supervision of Army officers. They drilled after school on the athletic field of Saunders Stadium, providing their own uniforms and guns. The uniforms cost approximately \$4.50 each, and they used

¹⁸ Lamar R. Stanley, official correspondence, letter from Frank K. Fletcher, Recruiter in charge, June 11, 1942.

¹⁹ Lamar R. Stanley, official correspondence, letter to J. R. Mort, Principal, Morrison High School, October 16, 1942.

²⁰ Principal's Progress Report, 1942-1943.

wooden rifles, made in the school's shops.²¹

As a result of the wartime intensification of vocational instruction, a course in Arts and Crafts was offered in the summer of 1944. It was taught by a faculty member of the high school Industrial Arts Department in two five week sessions.²²

Another worthwhile activity in which the boys and girls participated during the war period was the First Aid program. Six hundred high school pupils registered in the classes conducted by the American Red Cross, and all teachers were required to take the instructors course.²³

On the whole, the extra-curricular program at Newport News High School appears to have suffered little as a consequence of the Second World War. The daily activities period was given up and some procedures were curtailed but, on the other hand, the pupils engaged in new wartime activities which enriched and broadened their experience.

²¹ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, January 12, 1943, p.934

²² Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, June 13, 1944, p.1052

²³ Jester, loc. cit.

CHAPTER V

WARTIME HOUSING AND EQUIPMENT PROBLEMS

The housing and equipment phase of Newport News High School apparently benefited more than it suffered from the war and its consequences. As pointed out in Chapter II, this was due to the fact that the facilities, set up by the Federal Government for its wartime training program, were made available to the high school at the end of the war.

Those benefits dated back to 1939, when the increased war-preparedness activity in the area necessitated an improvement in the high school plant. In that year, with the financial aid of the Government, two wings were added to accommodate a gymnasium and a library.¹

In July, 1940, the United States Government inaugurated, under the high school administration, a national defense training program. The sum of forty thousand dollars was appropriated to outfit shops in the unoccupied George Washington Elementary School building and at Newport News High School.² As was stated in the

¹ Alexander Crosby Brown, editor, Newport News' 325 Years (Richmond: The Baughman Company, 1946), p.84

² Annie Lash Jester, editor, Newport News During the Second World War (Richmond: The Baughman Company, 1948) p.106

discussion of curriculum additions, that equipment was absorbed into the high school Industrial Arts program, after it had served its wartime purpose.³

The school program, itself, received direct Government aid on February 17, 1941, when a grant of \$1,292.05 was made to outfit an additional shop for Mechanical Drawing.⁴

As a result of the school's cooperation in the War Training Program, and due to crowded conditions in all its vocational classes, the State granted thirty thousand dollars toward a proposed new building. Also the Federal Government offered five thousand dollars worth of equipment, which had been stored there but never installed, because of the lack of space. The School Board approved construction of a Vocational Annex to Newport News High School in 1945. It was not completed until the summer of 1946, but its provision can be attributed to the wartime expansion of the Industrial Arts program.⁵

The School Board also contributed to the war effort by donating the use of the high school building and facilities for various community war projects. It was first used for that purpose on

³ Present work, p.9

⁴ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, March 11, 1941, p.745.

⁵ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, October 9, 1945, p. 1190

October 16, 1940, when the first peacetime Selective Service Registration in the history of the country was held.⁶

After the declaration of war, Newport News High School was used many times as a registration center for the following war services: Civilian Defense, Sugar Rationing, Gasoline Registration, War Ration Books, and the Second, Third and Fourth Draft Registrations.⁷

The auditorium of the high school was also utilized frequently to aid the war effort. The Little Theatre Group of the City and the Drama Department of the school staged shows there for the entertainment of service personnel in the area. The Hampton Roads Port of Embarkation presented films, lectures and sometimes recreational programs in the auditorium for the soldiers of the Newport News command. It was also the scene of Forums, conducted for the benefit of returning veterans, late in the war.⁸

On the night of July 28, 1943, a rally to promote the sale of War Bonds and Stamps was held in Saunders Stadium, the high school athletic field.⁹ It was used for that purpose again on the evening

⁶ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, November 12, 1940, p.723

⁷ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meetings, 1940-1944, pp. 723-1088.

⁸ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meetings, 1941-1945, pp. 798-1113

⁹ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, July 13, 1943, p.980

of February 15, 1944.¹⁰ No rental fee was charged on either occasion.

Newport News High School met another war need when it was designated as an air-raid shelter. Fortunately, it only served that purpose during drills and simulated attacks, but the building was made ready in the event of the real thing. Doors, windows, and corridors were blacked out and sand placed in buckets on the top floor, in compliance with the request of the Coordinator of Civilian Defense.¹¹

From August to December of 1942, the pupils of the high school relinquished the use of their cafeteria to military necessity. It was occupied and used by the Embarkation Division of the United States Army to feed eight hundred soldiers, while their quarters were under construction.¹² During that time, the students either went home to eat, packed lunches, or ate at one of the downtown restaurants.

After the return of the cafeteria to the high school, there were difficulties which interrupted its efficient operation. Food rationing rendered it difficult to maintain standards of nutrition

¹⁰ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, March 16, 1944, p.1024

¹¹ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, February 10, 1942, p.839

¹² Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, December 8, 1942, p.925.

and, in 1944, a new steam table was needed but the Board deemed it inadvisable to purchase one, with prices so high at the time. They decided to wait, hoping that such equipment might be secured as surplus commodities, after the war.¹³

Four months before the end of the war, the Board recognized also that the school building was in need of paint. They expressed the opinion, though, that it was a bad time to have paint work done, as Government restrictions prevented the use of pure linseed oil. Thus it was postponed.¹⁴

Band instruments were another wartime shortage as called to the people's attention by the Assistant Superintendent of Schools, in charge of buildings and supplies, and Clerk of the Board. He said:

The War Production Board has ordered manufacturers and wholesalers to sell their frozen stocks of band instruments directly to the United States Armed Forces, eliminating dealers or other middlemen from the transactions.¹⁵

The Superintendent reported to the School Board, in 1944, that the cost of construction of public school buildings had increased forty percent since 1940 and that manufacturers were unable to give

¹³ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, July 11, 1944, p.1063

¹⁴ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, May 8, 1945, p.1138

¹⁵ Script of WGH Radio Program, September 20, 1942.

assurance of delivery of material.¹⁶ That report held no immediate significance for Newport News High School, since the wings had been added to the building just before the war and the Vocational Annex was not built until after the conflict. It did mean, however, that the School Board was required to spend more money for the construction of two other schools in the system and, as a result, there were less funds for equipment, repair and upkeep at the high school.¹⁷

An additional source of expense, that originated during that period, was the special insurance against damage due to enemy attack. It was known as War Damage Insurance, financed by the War Damage Corporation in Washington, D. C., and the annual premiums on Newport News High School were approximately four hundred dollars.¹⁸

In summary, it is obvious that the housing and equipment facilities at the high school in Newport News were expanded through the acquisition of war surplus materials from the Federal Government.

The School played a valuable part in the community war effort by making its facilities, particularly the auditorium, available whenever needed. It was also a center for the various registrations necessitated by World War II.

¹⁶ Minutes of Newport News School Board Meeting, October 10, 1944, p.1085

¹⁷ Samuel D. Green, personal interview, July 27, 1951.

¹⁸ Original policies on file in the School Board office.

The war brought its disadvantages, though, and sacrifices were required of Newport News High School. The cafeteria was completely taken over for four months, in 1942, by the United States Army and, when it was returned, food shortages were encountered. The purchase of needed equipment, and authorization of repairs were postponed due to shortages and high costs.

Everything considered, however, the permanent benefits derived seem to outweigh the temporary inconveniences experienced, and the high school plant and its facilities were strengthened as a result of the Second World War.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

An international conflict, such as World War II, naturally affected the lives of the citizens in the countries involved. Especially did that hold true in Newport News, Virginia, one of the leading war production centers of the United States. Thus the high school of that city, in the midst of the war activity, was greatly influenced by what went on about it.

This study has dealt with effects of the war upon five phases of the high school organization and, in every case, the influence was greatest in the field of Industrial Arts. That is understood upon consideration of the fact that Newport News was a major industrial community and, the Federal Government inaugurated there an extensive program of vocational education for war production workers in the area. That project was operated through the Newport News High School Administration and, consequently, gave impetus to the Industrial Arts program of the school.

New equipment was installed by the Government and, at the conclusion of the war, it was turned over to the high school. As a result, courses in Automobile Mechanics, Machine Shop, and Metal Shop became permanent additions to the curriculum.

The enrollments in the Industrial Arts classes increased and,

with State and Federal aid, a Vocational Annex to the school was constructed in 1946, to house the war surplus equipment and to accommodate the additional pupils. Interest in the field remained high in the post-war period and will probably continue to grow because of the recent industrial boom, resulting from new Naval contracts awarded the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company.

A much needed activity in the community, springing from the war, was adult education. The Evening School of the high school was originally organized as a unit in the defense program but was continued by the School Board, for the citizens of Newport News, after the war.

In conformity with Federal and State requests a daily period of Physical Education was required of every pupil. Classroom instruction in the Health and Hygiene phases of Physical Education was also inaugurated.

The need for counseling of the students was accentuated during the emotional strain which accompanied the war. The present Guidance Department, with a full-time head and four part-time counselors, is an outgrowth of that need.

In the realm of extra-curricular activities the war was beneficial because the students engaged in many war projects which broadened their experiences and, at the same time, aided the war effort.

The percentage of high school faculty turnover during the war was surprisingly low but, in recent years, it has been on the increase. In that respect, it may be significant that the teachers' salaries have not kept pace with the increasing costs of living in the area.¹

It is difficult to distinguish between the enduring effects of World War II and those springing from the present mobilization movement. Particularly is that true at Newport News, an industrial center, which is again booming with defense preparation.

Nevertheless, in view of the findings of this study, it is concluded:

(1) That the program of vocational education for defense workers, centered at Newport News High School during World War II, has resulted in a permanent expansion of the Industrial Arts curriculum of the school.

(2) That Government war surplus equipment, turned over to the high school at the end of the war, supplemented its Industrial Arts facilities.

¹ In fairness to the School Board it must be acknowledged that all teachers were given a double increment and all maximum salaries were raised \$250 in the new 1951-1952 salary schedule. It was not included in Table VII because the cost of living index for 1951 was not available. The salaries, however, still lag behind the 1950 living expenses.

(3) That the Evening School extension of the high school, instituted as a part of the Federal defense project, has met a community need and has been continued by the School Board as a means of adult education.

(4) That emphasis upon the Industrial Arts and Evening School divisions of the high school will probably be intensified in the future if industrial activity, resulting from the latest national mobilization movement, gains momentum.

(5) That the wartime re-organization and intensification of Physical Education has persisted in the present school program.

(6) That the guidance services now provided for the pupils of Newport News High School are an outgrowth of the need for such a program, recognized by school authorities during the war.

(7) That no additional units in Mathematics and Science were offered at Newport News during the war because a full four years instruction in both fields had been offered there for years. There was, however, increased interest in those subjects, as evidenced by larger registrations of pupils in the classes.

(8) That high school students were brought closer to community life through participation in cooperative war projects.

(9) That increases in the number of Shipyard employees during the war were not accompanied by corresponding increases in the number of pupils enrolled in the Newport News High School.

(10) That the percentage of faculty turnover at the high school was comparatively low during the war period but has increased in recent years.

(11) That the teachers' salaries have not matched the rising costs of living in the area.

(12) That an effective athletic program was in operation at Newport News High School throughout the war, in spite of equipment, transportation and coaching personnel difficulties.

(13) That the high school building and facilities were used frequently for various war-effort purposes.

(14) That equipment shortages were experienced but did not seriously interfere with the functioning of the school.

(15) That, in general, Newport News High School has derived more lasting benefits than ill consequences from the Second World War.

In light of the above conclusions the following recommendations are proposed:

(1) That, in the event of a future period of national emergency the Newport News High School administration be prepared to expand the school's industrial arts, adult education and Physical Education facilities.

(2) That, in the event of another emergency period, experience in World War II suggests provision for expansion in the areas mentioned in (1) above rather than for a general enrollment increase.

(3) That the high school's guidance service enlarged to include adult counseling, a placement bureau and follow-up studies of graduates, in that way the effectiveness of the program, developed during the war, could be evaluated.

(4) That increased interest in Mathematics and Science be anticipated, in case of another war, and steps taken to meet the additional demands.

(5) That, because of the educational values which they contribute, high school pupils engage in cooperative community projects in normal years as well as during time of war.

(6) That a study be made to determine the correlation between faculty turnover at Newport News High School and the teachers' salaries, as compared with the cost of living in the city.

(7) That the proposed study be extended to include the effects of the rising cost of living upon the total educational program of the high school.

(8) That teachers' salaries be raised to a level comparable with living expenses in the city, if the suggested study reveals that such is not already the case.

(9) That high school officials anticipate the likelihood that the building and facilities will be needed to help meet emergency demands, in the event of another emergency period, and plan accordingly.

(10) That, in case of another period of national emergency, equipment and transportation difficulties be anticipated and provision made so that the high school program will not be seriously interrupted.

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